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SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-eighth year

Letter dated 3 November 1993 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia concerning the appeals addressed to the United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly, other international forums and Governments by some non-governmental organizations (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 114 (c), and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIĆ
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i

ANNEX

Statement of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia concerning the appeals addressed to the United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly, other international forums and Governments by some non-governmental organizations, issued on 29 October 1993

In view of the increasingly frequent appeals to the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly, the European Community, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), other international forums and Governments of United Nations Member States addressed by some non-governmental organizations such as Amnesty International and International Helsinki Watch, as well as the fact that given previous experiences, it is likely that some other non-governmental organizations will follow their example, the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs wishes to draw attention to the following:

It reiterates that such broad and coordinated actions alleged to protect human rights in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are aimed at exerting concerted political pressure on the Federal Republic, this time in connection with Kosovo and Metohija and other integral parts of its territory inhabited by members of national minorities.

There is no reason for such broad and aggressive action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia because of its alleged refusal to cooperate in the field of human rights, including the CSCE monitoring mission and that of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, Mr. T. Mazowiecki.

International human rights forums are well aware that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has never refused to cooperate with international organs and bodies within the United Nations system. On the contrary, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is fully abiding by its international commitments undertaken in accordance with the mechanisms elaborated for the protection and promotion of human rights within the United Nations.

Thus, for example, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia maintains good and close cooperation with the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, to the extent to which it is currently possible under the decision of the United Nations General Assembly. Mr. Mazowiecki visited the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia twice, despite Yugoslavia's objections to the partiality of his reporting. His closest associate, Mrs. Stephanie Grant, spent a few days in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including the visit to Kosovo and Metohija. This constitutes proof that we are prepared to cooperate with the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has continued to cooperate with the special groups and special rapporteurs of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. In August 1993, Mr. T. van Dongen, a member of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, visited the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We have maintained regular correspondence with special rapporteurs,

such as those concerned with mass and arbitrary executions, torture, religious intolerance, mercenaries, etc. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia submits regular reports and all requested and available information, including government reports required by some resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights, the Subcommission and the General Assembly. Furthermore, it fully abides by the procedure under Economic and Social Council resolution 1503 and submits replies to communications addressed to the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia maintains these contacts despite the fact that, by illegal means and against their rules of procedure, it has been denied the right to participate in the work of almost all these human rights bodies. The refusal of the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna last June, to allow us to participate in its proceedings is the most obvious example of the unwillingness of human rights bodies, mandated to promote cooperation in this field, to cooperate with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is particularly unjustifiably accused because it allegedly denied its hospitality to the CSCE mission of long duration to Kosovo, Raska and Vojvodina. It is not true that the authorities in Belgrade closed the CSCE mission of long duration. The mission discontinued its work upon the expiry of its mandate under the protocol concerning the extension of the memorandum of understanding of 28 April 1993 and negotiations to extend its stay were not renewed because of the lack of readiness and political will on the part of competent CSCE bodies to cooperate with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as an equal partner. It is well known that at the 13th meeting of the CSCE Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) held on 8 July 1992, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was suspended from CSCE and its representatives were denied the right to participate in meetings and activities of this organization. This is totally unacceptable to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, being in contravention of the principles of equality and sovereignty and detrimental to mutual cooperation and the entire CSCE process. In such a situation, the activities of the CSCE mission of long duration could be considered only in the context of lifting the suspension decision and the full reintegration of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in CSCE as a sovereign State. An essential and indispensable feature of any cooperation, particularly, within CSCE, is participation on an equal footing. The normalization of the status of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia within CSCE would establish equitable relations and open the way to comprehensive and fruitful cooperation between CSCE and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This was the subject-matter of the letter addressed by Mr. Vladislav Jovanovic, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Mrs. Margareth af Ugglas, Chairperson of the CSCE Council.

The arrests of some ethnic Albanians, mentioned in the report, have nothing to do with their previous employment or contact with members of the CSCE mission of long duration, but with their involvement in the activities of terrorist and separatist organizations, which have been recently disclosed in Kosovo and Metohija.

Allegations of widespread human rights violations and intensified police repression in Kosovo and Metohija are arbitrary. In addition, the CSCE "troika report" submitted to the 13th CSO meeting in Prague noted that no side directly indicated a possibility of imminent dramatic developments in this province.

As regards the recommendations adopted at the latest CSCE human dimension implementation meeting, held at Warsaw from 27 September to 15 October 1993, we recall once again that, due to the well-known status of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in CSCE, Yugoslavia has not yet received these recommendations and, therefore, cannot comment on them. This is another proof of the detrimental effects of Yugoslavia's non-participation in international gatherings.

Most accusations and allegations contained in the Amnesty International report entitled "International Monitoring in Kosovo and Beyond", particularly in the part entitled "Human rights violations and fear of escalations of violence in Kosovo Province", are extremely generalized and uncorroborated and based on indirect information. The fact that this important organization releases many uncorroborated and unverified allegations and accusations can be also illustrated by the recent intercession of Amnesty International in "The case of Sami Kurteshi". Thousands of letters requesting his release were sent to Yugoslav ambassadors and prominent figures in Yugoslavia. However, having checked with the republican and provincial authorities, Federal authorities established that no person of this name was ever detained or arrested, nor was any infraction or any criminal proceeding instituted against him. Moreover, while these letters were from all over the world, Sami Kurteshi was registered as a member of a non-governmental organization and participated in the session of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities last August. Therefore, we consider that Amnesty International should base its future reports on corroborated information. Amnesty International could obtain such information on the spot in educational, health, information and other institutions in Kosovo and Metohija. We are prepared to cooperate with Amnesty International along these lines.

The appeals of non-governmental organizations tend to picture the human rights situation of Albanians, Hungarians and Muslims as exceptionally difficult because of the alleged repression of Serb authorities. However, none of these non-governmental organizations has so far considered it necessary to appeal for respect for the rights to life, an adequate standard of living, health and education and for many other basic and inalienable human rights of which the 10.5 million people of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and over 600,000 refugees are deprived due to the isolation and other repressive measures imposed on them by the national community.

As far as the overall human rights situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is concerned, we wish to point out that in the conditions of severe sanctions imposed by the international community, war in its vicinity, various political pressures aimed at its complete fragmentation, complete excommunication from all international forums, severed cultural, scientific, educational and particularly economic ties, Yugoslavia has been exerting its greatest efforts to abide fully by all its commitments under 21 international human rights instruments. This is in full compliance with its policy of readiness to contribute, as an equal partner, to peace, security and overall prosperity, where respect for human rights and their promotion are of vital importance.